



CITY OF HOUSTON

Fire Department

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Fire Marshal

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Subject: *Decorative Vegetation Use*

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The use of decorative vegetation (including Christmas Trees) inside buildings shall be in accordance with the City of Houston *Fire Code*:

1. Natural cut trees, where permitted, shall have the trunk bottoms cut off at least 0.5 inch (12.7 mm) above the original cut and shall be placed in an approved support device.
2. Natural cut trees are prohibited in the following occupancies: Public Assembly, Educational facilities, Institutional facilities, Merchants, Personal Care facilities, Hotels, Motels, Dormitories, and in the common areas of Apartments and Condominiums. Trees located in areas protected by an approved automatic sprinkler system are allowed in Public Assemblies, Educational facilities, Merchants, public areas of Hotels, Motels and Dormitories, and in common areas of Apartments and Condominiums.
3. The support device that holds the tree in an upright position shall be of a type that is stable and that meets all of the following criteria:
 - a. The device shall hold the tree securely and be of adequate size to avoid tipping over of the tree.
 - b. The device shall be capable of containing a minimum 2-day supply of water.
 - c. The water level, when full, shall cover the tree stem at least 2 inches (51 mm). The water level shall be maintained above the fresh cut and checked at least once daily.
4. The tree shall be removed from the building whenever the needles or leaves fall off readily when a tree branch is shaken or if the needles are brittle and break when bent between the thumb and index finger. The tree shall be checked daily for dryness.
5. The required width of any portion of an exit shall not be obstructed by decorative vegetation.
6. Candles and open flames shall not be used on or near decorative vegetation. Natural cut trees shall be kept a distance from heat vents and any open flame or heat-producing devices at least equal to the height of the tree.
7. The use of unlisted electrical wiring and lighting on decorative vegetation is prohibited.
8. Artificial decorative vegetation shall be flame resistant or flame retardant. Such flame resistance or flame retardance shall be documented and certified by the manufacturer.
9. The use of electrical wiring and lighting on metal artificial trees is prohibited.

